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IN THE KLONDIKE


The story of a New Zealand Bride
in the Canadian North.



*Toby Moody in her memory corner, "Chooutla" Redcliffs,
Christchurch, New Zealand.*

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**Mary Davis Moody--
as told to Flo Whyard**
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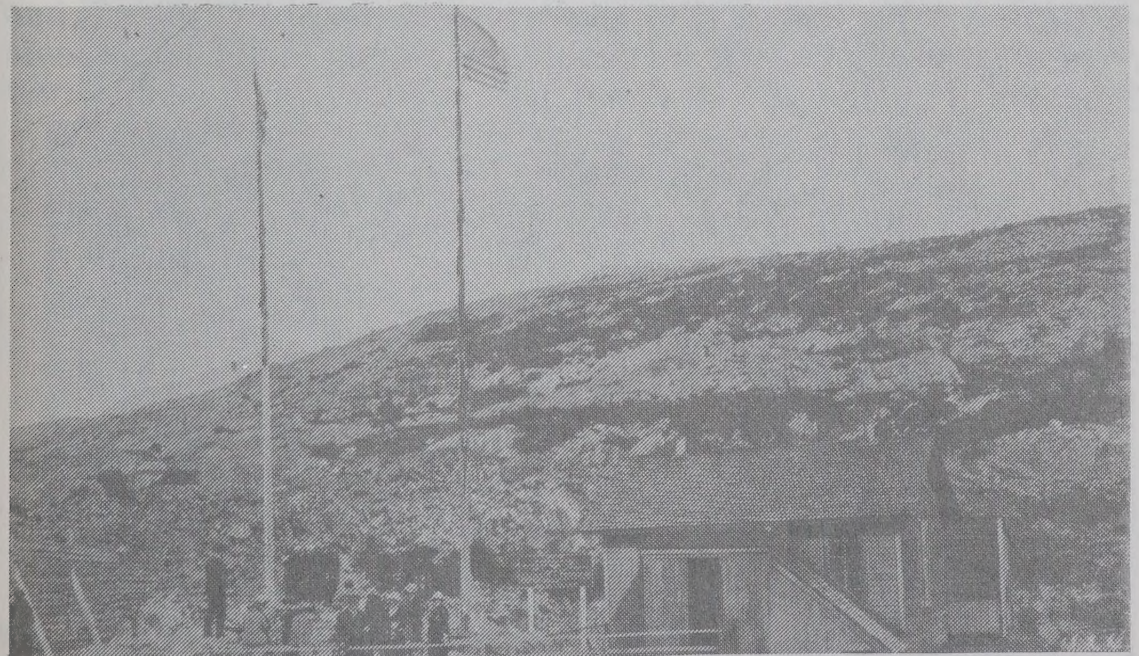
Klondike Holiday

In a neat little cottage in Redcliffs, a suburb of Christchurch, New Zealand, a bright-eyed lady in her eighties sits surrounded by memories and souvenirs of the Yukon and Alaska. Her home is named Choooutla, after the old Indian residential school at Carcross, in northern Canada, and the highlights of her life have all been northern ones.

Mary Davis Anderson (Toby) was the daughter of a Presbyterian schoolmaster on New Zealand's south island, and became a nurse. With her sister Nellie Anderson, (Torchy) who was a teacher, she planned her first venture to the Klondike in 1921. Together they sailed from Auckland to Vancouver, only to find that all passage by ship to Skagway, Alaska, was booked for that season. Disappointed, they worked their way around Western Canada for a few months, then headed for home by Christmas, to make more money and better plans.

In 1922 they booked passage straight through from Auckland to Dawson City...a 24-day journey. They learned there had been 70 New Zealanders pass through Vancouver en route to the Klondike in 1898, but they were the first two Kiwi girls to venture that far and found themselves being interviewed en route as newsworthy.

They sailed up the British Columbia coastline on board the CPR's PRINCESS LOUISE, calling in at Panhandle ports, visiting Juneau, the Mendenhall Glacier and finally Skagway where they boarded the White Pass and Yukon Route for the train ride up over the Summit to Whitehorse. At the top, they were put through routine questioning by the RCMP who even in 1922 were making sure that no one entered the Yukon who might become a liability.



The boundary between Alaska and Yukon, at The Summit on White Pass & Yukon Route in 1922.



Sternwheelers docked at Whitehorse in the 1920's. The SS CASCA, at right, carried Toby Moody on her voyage down the Yukon River Photo courtesy Yukon Archives

Whitehorse was a little town of 300, busy with rail and riverboat traffic. The two sisters immediately boarded the sternwheeler S.S. CASCA, for their first trip down the Yukon River to Dawson, the heart of the Klondike.

It was August, and autumn colours were already appearing with early frost along the riverbanks and mountain slopes. Through the Five Finger Rapids they went, visiting woodcutters' camps at each stop for fuel, warmly welcomed everywhere. By the time they set foot in Dawson City on August 31 they felt at home.



Lower LeBarge, showing head of Thirty Mile River.

Supposedly a ghost town in 1922, Dawson City was still the seat of Yukon government, with handsome homes and administration buildings, gardens and lawns, a large detachment of R.C.M.P. and a traditional social life. Its World War monument attested to the Yukoners who would never return, and Dawson families were still mourning the loss of relatives and friends who had drowned with the sinking of the S.S. SOPHIA off Juneau in 1918. Planned for 15,000, its population had shrunk to 500, with several hundred more living and working on the gold-bearing creeks.

But the people were still warm and hospitable. The sisters had met a member of the Force on board the CASCA, which resulted in immediate introductions and a happy two-month holiday. Their first stop was in the Royal Alexandra Hotel on Front Street, which required some adjustment to the sloping floors caused by the permafrost, and later they rented a small cabin on Second Avenue at the base of the famous "slide" scar on Moosehide Mountain, from which they had a beautiful view of the Yukon River. They were just above the fine log home of Mr. Finlayson, then manager of the Bank of Montreal, and in fact, he was their landlord and host for many elegant dinners.

In her diary, Toby wrote: "Our frequent dinners at the Finlaysons were elegant affairs, his Chinese cook preparing the most delectable meals of moose, caribou, wild duck, ptarmigan and chicken. One night I wore my emerald evening dress and had crème de menthe to match! Here too we met Dr. Alfred Thompson, the Yukon Member of Parliament, and invited him to our cabin for tea. He hates tea, we discovered later, but drank it that day like a lamb!"

They named their cabin "Te Whare" to remind them of home, and opened it up to many new friends, one of whom, the Rev. George Moody, was to become important in Toby's life. At Dawson, women were in the minority, and to their delight, the Anderson sisters found



Toby Moody revisits the cabin, Te Whare, where she and her sister spent a happy six week holiday in Dawson City in 1922....nearly 40 years later, it was boarded up and surrounded by weeds.



This photo was taken in Dawson City on July 29, 1922, when the I.O.D.E. Chapter held a reception honouring Mrs. George Black, seated centre, front in white.

Photo courtesy Yukon Archives.

themselves wine and dined, “waited on and completely spoiled as the men vied for our attention. Scarcely a day passed without an invitation to dinner, picnics or dances. With bachelors galore, we never lacked for escorts. Some wooed us with cranberry pies, others with new-made bread, among other northern delicacies.”

Flowers and vegetables continued to bloom in the Dawson gardens after the first frosts, and the days were still warm and sunny as the nights grew colder. The girls spent much of their time poking around the older parts of the town, intrigued by the derelict dancehalls and saloons dating from the Gold Rush. They walked to Moosehide, the Indian village four miles along the river, where they met the Anglican missionary-teacher, the Rev. Mr. Totty and his Indian wife. Here they visited several homes and admired the beautiful beadwork and embroidery ornamenting moccasins, belts and slippers.

One glorious day, they took lunches and crossed the river on the cable-ferry for the hike to the old farm at Sunnydale; another outing took them to the fox farm across the river, where they admired thirty little “kits.” In the town, cabins were still left open and visitors were welcome to help themselves, so long as they left a good supply of firewood ready for the owner.

One day, their escorts, Corp and Ryan, took them to see the famous Klondike creeks, beginning with a tour of Klondike City, or Lousetown, with some of its 400 log cabins still standing and ruins of

the old Klondike Mines Railway rusting in the weeds. Driving out from town about seven miles, they walked over the hydraulics and took snapshots of miners working their claims. Dredges were working, their huge buckets hauling out gravel from 32 feet below bedrock. Mr. McFarlane showed them through the big machine, and the manager of the gold company helped pack them across a muddy slough.

At Bear Creek, the centre of the Yukon Consolidated Gold Corporation's community, they visited the gold room, saw where the raw gold was melted into bricks they had seen in the bank at Dawson, and inspected a poke of gold nuggets worth £100.

Invited to the Wilsons' for tea, they discovered they too were from New Zealand and had a great visit. Back at the Corp-Ryan outfit there was a wild duck dinner with homemade bread and currant loaf, and several miners from New Zealand, all of whom agreed the Andersons were the first girls they had seen from home. (Before they left Dawson, the girls were given brooches made from gold nuggets from that mine.) There followed shooting picnics, cookouts on the hilltops above the river, dinners at Finlaysons', supper at the Anglican Hostel with the Rev. Creighton McCullum. One day they met a Major Armstrong, an Englishman mining in the Klondike, who had been in New Zealand and knew their family there!

They visited the Council Chamber, sat in the Judge's seat, met the famous Sergeant Joy of story-telling fame, climbed the Dome for picnics, enjoyed trying on Mrs. Field's furs..beaver coat, musk ox robe, polar bear rug. Bishop Stringer was another friend to the girls, and was down to see them off together with their "gang" on October 11th, after many sad farewells.

The last tourists to come out for the winter, they sat at the captain's table, together with Dr. Anderson, Major Armstrong and Mr. McAdam, and were privileged passengers.

Their riverboat was pulling a barge loaded with fuel picked up at various wood stops, but the cords were quickly consumed in the boilers which supplied the steam power for the great sternwheel and for general heating purposes. Just as their meat supply was running low, near the end of the journey, the small riverboat, LOON, came out to meet them with fresh supplies.

They arrived at Whitehorse on October 16 and were allowed to sleep on board, but after docking, the heat was turned off, and the girls were glad to go ashore the next morning and see their fellowpassengers off on the train to Skagway. Mr. McAdam helped them find a cabin owned by Tom Dickson in Dawson, who had offered it to them, and they settled in comfortably after ordering wood and water brought by the pailful for 25 cents each. The cabin had electricity which was a boon in the now darkening days.

In Whitehorse they attended a lecture given by Mrs. George Black, who had been chatelaine of Government House in Dawson

during her husband's tenure as Commissioner. Among their new friends was a Mrs. Watson, who invited them to a shooting party at Caribou Lake, about two and a half miles from town. There they camped, lit a fire and enjoyed a delicious tea with a happy crowd of northerners, including Dr. Naismith and his young English bride, a talented pianist.



*Dr. and Mrs. Naismith
at Whitehorse in the
early 1920's.*

Torchy gave the school children a talk about New Zealand, concluding with a description of a typical New Zealand Christmas, with hot sunny weather, picnics, boating and swimming. Although all listened with rapt attention, they evidently swallowed some of it with a pinch of salt, for one lad was heard to remark: "Boy oh boy! Did she pull our legs!"

On Hallowe'en there was a masquerade dance, and a grand Armistice Ball on November 11, where the Mounties in resplendent scarlet stole the show. Now the woods were mantled in snow, the nearby lakes covered thinly with ice, and the Kiwis found it difficult to keep warm, bundled up in thick sweaters, woollen stockings and knee caps, breeches and moccasins with felt insoles, and warm scarves over their heads.

The big question was whether to stay in Whitehorse over Christmas, or leave. They hoped for an opening of some kind where they could be useful, and it came when the housekeeper at the Carcross School for Indian children broke her leg. Bishop Stringer came to ask if Toby could help out. That was her chance to spend the winter in the Yukon, while Torchy went on to teach in Labrador.

Their last trip together was made with Mrs. Naismith in a private car for the 50-mile drive to Carcross. This description from Toby's diary:

“We were so crowded, wearing clothes of such warmth and weight, that I could hardly turn my head to wave farewell to friends...we drove until after noon when we came to a roadhouse and stopped for lunch. It was a log building with huge rafters, looking uninviting from outside but warmly hospitable within. We were met by friendly people who gave us a good meal of mountain sheep to satisfy our ravenous appetites. And fresh milk to drink! Before we left, they filled our hot-water bottles -- and for all this lovely food and attention they charged us only one dollar.

“We set off on the remaining part of the journey and in an hour came to the crossing of a frozen river. Since it was new ice, the driver got out to test it before attempting to drive across, leaving us alone in the car. No sooner had he gone than the car started to run down the incline! None of us could drive but we all grabbed at something -- I clutched the wheel, Torchy hauled on the brake arm and we stopped. Badly frightened, we were thankful when our guide returned. He had decided the ice was not safe to risk car and passengers, so leaving us on one side he drove across the creaking ice, then carried us each over in his arms.

“Before long, snow was falling. Cold and tired, we were glad to sight the school. The windows shone with a yellow glow from kerosene lamps and the faces of 35 smiling children gave us a welcome we had not expected. In fact, it was the motor car, not us, they were fascinated by ...it was the first to come to the school!

“Torchy and Mrs. Naismith, always a popular guest, stayed for several days of visiting and seeing the countryside. When they drove back to Whitehorse, I felt as lonely as never before in my life.”

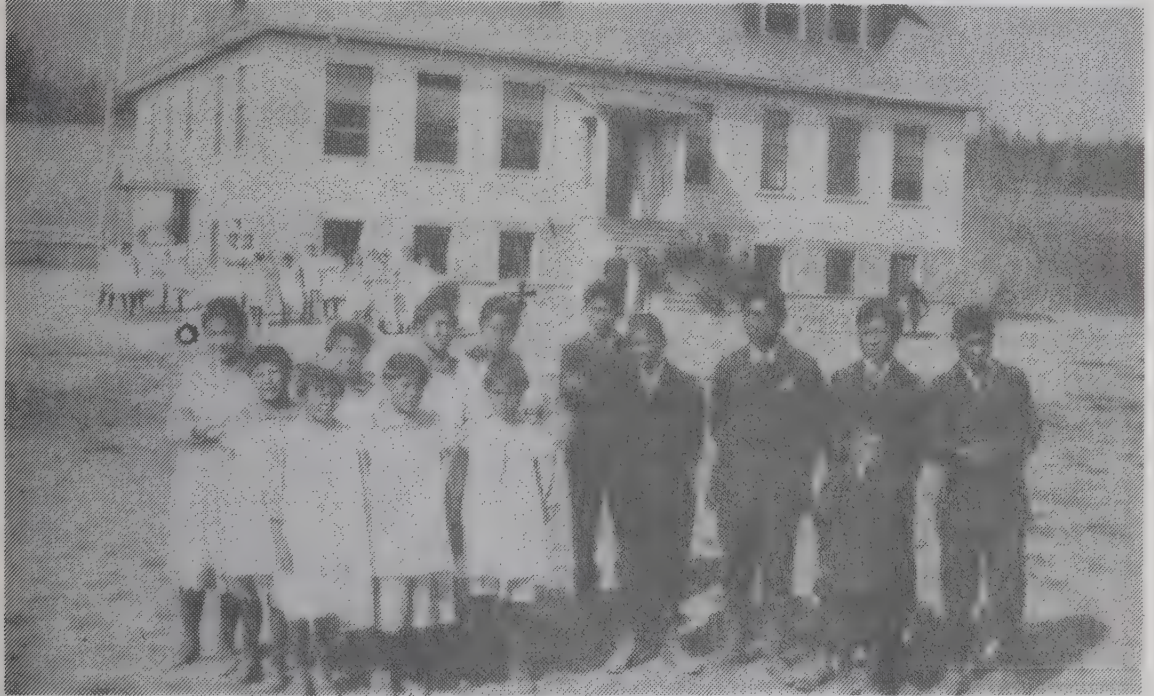


Winter Patrol on Upper Stoney Creek.

Chas. J. Ott photo

Carcross Cook

Chooutla, in Yukon Indian dialect, means "Laughing waters" and was the name given to the sparkling stream emptying Chooutla Lake into the Nares River between Lake Bennett and Tagish Lake. The stream is the water supply for the modern school which succeeded the log establishment begun across the narrows in 1903 by Bishop Bompas, after he had moved there from Fortymile, below Dawson City on the Yukon River. Bishop Bompas had also been responsible for naming the tiny settlement Carcross, an abbreviation of Caribou Crossing; the original name had caused confusion in delivery of mail at the turn of the century, for there were several Caribou Crossings in the north.



Students at the Anglican Boarding School, Carcross, Yukon in 1922-3. This building later burned and was replaced 30 years later by a large modern residential school.

The Indian residential school operated by the Anglican Church had grown from an assortment of log cabins into a fairly imposing frame building when Toby arrived in 1922. There were 55 Indian boys and girls in residence, plus a staff of seven, which meant that as temporary housekeeper, she rose at five a.m. to start meals. Twice a week, 70 loaves of bread and quantities of cookies were baked in the large brick oven...the school even made its own yeast. Freshly-baked and still hot, the bread was set out in the snow until needed and to Toby's surprise, the thawed loaves were preferred by the children to the freshly-baked bread. (She would be interested to know that Carcross bread and buns are still a special project at the present community school, and are sold as a source of funds for the non-profit group of lay workers operating it today.)



***Freddy Pelly, the Biggest
boy at Carcross School
when Toby worked there.***

To offset the dark, cold winter days, everything indoors was made as bright and cheerful as possible. At special times such as Christmas, Easter and other holidays, baking was doubled and decorations or icing thick and colourful.

Toby found that life with the children indoors was fun, and outdoors was wonderful. Her diary reads: "My first sleigh-ride, and boy! did I love it! Freddy, the biggest and strongest — and dearest — of the boys drove me to Carcross. As we glided the mile or so across the lagoon and into the tiny village, bells on the dogs' harness were tinkling. The sound seemed to carry across the huge, frozen lake and echo from the majestic mountains all around us.

"I just love this place" she added, "the people and the children. Sundays, everyone walks over to the church in town, a route march in the cold. Then home again, to lunch, tingling and hungry." Near Christmas, Torchy came for a weeklong visit, and they were invited into the homes of Carcross residents for dinner and to parties as they had been at Dawson City earlier, but by Christmas, most had gone south leaving only six families to brave the winter months.

Preparations for Christmas at the school kept Toby busy, cooking, cleaning and planning for the celebrations. Quite worn out with excitement, the children barely made it to Christmas Eve when Santa Claus arrived and most of the villagers came to the school's Christmas party and supper. Every man, woman and child received a gift, even if it was only candy. It was after midnight before Toby could relax and write in her diary: "My first northern Christmas Day! Am I thrilled!"

At breakfast when staff and children ate together, there were presents piled on every plate. For Toby there were twelve little gifts of Indian handwork, made by the children. Christmas dinner, a feast of turkey, wild cranberry sauce and plum pudding, was followed by

hours of games and stories with the children. Even later, through moonlight bright as day, she went with another staff member to a dance in Carcross, returning tired out but content at two in the morning.

"I've learned to walk on snowshoes...and been skating on the frozen lagoon," Toby wrote a short time later. "The temperature has dropped to 30 below already and risen again to ten below so that I can finally say I found -10 oppressively mild! It even rose to an unprecedented 32 above in January, so warm it was like spring."

Outdoor activities depended on the weather, with the loveliest of the days cut short by sudden storms and falling snow. Even the familiar lagoon became as menacing as Scott's Antarctic on one occasion when Toby became lost in a snowstorm and was given up after a search by the school staff and Carcross residents.

The sun, which drops below the horizon during December and part of January, now returned, although the cold seemed to get deeper despite the sunlight. By February 10th she wrote: "We are able to breakfast without light at 7:30 a.m., a cheering prospect despite the epidemic of colds and gastric flu that plague us all." Word from sister Torchy was not very cheery — the woman with whom she was staying was shot and killed accidentally when she was mistaken for a moose!



Ivy Barlow on the steps at Carcross School with some of the Indian students 50 years ago.

But always the children brightened the darkest, coldest days for Toby. Part of the entertainment was their kind of English, compared to New Zealand usage. Toby wrote: "They usually finish a sentence with 'only' or say 'I'm sick hard' or 'lazy hard'. Their strongest criticism is 'You mouse'—implying cowardice. When I rattle off the name of my New Zealand home, Whakarewarewa they come back with Whakawawawa!"

At Easter, she baked special treats and painted funny faces on hardboiled eggs.

They lost two children that tragic winter. Illness and death took little Sarah followed by the suffering and death of little Tommy Black Eyes. Toby wrote: "Stupefied and miserable, we all made the long walk to the cemetery. I could have wept as Mr. Barlow, with the two big boys, David and Freddy, drove up with an old horse and rig with a little purple wreath and two crosses on the coffin in the back."

The good days seemed to have gone. Ill with shock and exhaustion from helping nurse Tommy along with Mr. Hooper and Miss King, she couldn't sleep. Nerves taut, close to tears, she wrote: "Owls hoot outside the window, foxes yip and wolves howl in a melody of sadness and death that cuts to our hearts and gives us more sleepless nights."

This depression might have lasted all winter if the Rev. Mr. Young had not arrived on the White Pass train, on his way back to his mission at the Indian village of Champagne, on the Kluane Lake trail. His constant energy put new life in the residence. His stories, some funny and others tragic, of his missionary years at Herschel Island, made light of hard times.

He had spent 28 years at Herschel, just off the Arctic coast of the Yukon, and had stories to tell of Bishop Stringer, (successor to Bompas) "the bishop who ate his boots"; of the Eskimos, their way of life and joys and amazing understanding. By the time Mr. Young left for Champagne, spring had arrived in Carcross. Winter cold, illness and death were forgotten as April brought early light, birds and small



Cutting ice on Lake Bennett; Billy Njootli, Toby Moody and Paddy McGundy.



Junior boys at Chooutla School show off some of their garden produce.

game on all sides, and the first purple crocus on the hill. Now the dinner parties resumed, as northerners returned for the summer, there were new people in town, including ten crew members of the stern-wheeler S.S. TUTSHI.

The loveliest months of summer passed quickly, with boat rides and hikes, and a boat trip to Atlin. The visit to the old gold rush town included dinner with the officers on board S.S. TARAHE. Picnics and even hunting were highlights, and Toby finished off a good-sized bear which had been caught in one of the school's traps. The big boys from the school dealt with the hide, so that when she left she took along her very own bearskin rug.

"The children came down to wave goodbye" she wrote. "Everywhere in Carcross there were tourists arriving....but I was leaving."



Docked beside the Carcross railway bridge in 1920 were SS TUTSHI and the GLEANER, familiar sights on the lakes when Toby Moody worked at Chooutla Residential School in Carcross.. Photo courtesy Yukon Archives.

Dawson Days

Almost a year passed before Toby returned to the Yukon. Her holiday in Vancouver and Victoria B.C. was followed by a less-than-satisfactory job at the Smokey Lake Hospital in Alberta, in a rough farming district pioneered by Russian immigrants. She wasn't happy there, and was relieved to receive another call from Bishop Stringer. This time he asked her to return to Dawson City to take charge of the Anglican Hostel for Indian children while the resident couple took a year's furlough.

"I accepted gladly" she wrote in her diary, "By April first I was on my way down the Fraser River by small motor launch. There was time for a visit with Torchy in Vancouver before she left for Dr. Grenfell's Mission in far-away Labrador, and I went north again. On my way through Skagway, I met the Fields, old friends from Dawson, on their way outside and caught up on some of the news.



Bishop Stringer took this group shot at the Dawson Hostel showing four Bakers five Van Bibbers and five DeWolfe children with Effie McDonald, in 1926.

“Our steamer, the CASCA, was the first boat of the season leaving Whitehorse June first. And what a trip! Through ice four feet thick in places...we were held up once for 17 hours until the ice moved out. I watched them paint the ice of Lake Laberge with lamp-black to draw the sun’s rays and hasten the thawing so the boats could get through.

“June fourth I was back in my beloved Dawson and ready to begin my new work, relieving Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, dedicated and beloved couple who were in need of a year’s respite from the demands of a hostel and its children.”

(It was Charles Johnson who had accompanied the bishop on the famous Arctic journey which had nearly caused their death and brought Stringer to the point where he actually boiled his mukluks and drank the broth from the moosehide.)



Some of the Dawson hostel residents in their Sunday best, behind St. Paul's church.

“I quickly renewed old acquaintances and made new friends. With some members of the Toboggan Club I climbed to the top of the Midnight Dome on June 21st to celebrate the longest day of the year. We reached the top in two hours; the men built a big campfire and made us a fine spruce-bough seat. We made billy-tea and shared refreshments while the sun barely dipped at 11:30 and was rising again before one.

“While the fire died down, we swapped yarns and climbed to the top to take pictures of the vast panorama of the Klondike and Yukon watersheds, and mountains that rolled away to Alaska on one side, the Arctic on another, and south to Whitehorse and far-away Outside.”

The short Yukon summer passed all too quickly with familiar activities such as hikes, picnics, dances and church gatherings.

“The Rev. George Moody came upriver from Fort Yukon and Eagle whenever possible. He visited the hostel, took dinner with us, and one lovely day we picked pansies together in Mr. and Mrs. Berton’s garden.”

On August 24, 1924, Toby wrote: "The first frost came today, but only a few potato plants and flowers were bitten. It could have been a false alarm with summer lasting several more weeks, but instead, a hard frost the very next night has destroyed everything in every garden. Storm windows went up on the hostel and the people of Dawson are preparing for a long, cold winter!"

The last boat of the season pulled in October 10 at 2:30 p.m. and was on its way upriver before midnight. Wrote Toby: "I had supper aboard with nice Captain Campbell and waited on the dock to wave goodbye to her 48 passengers. The people on board cheered as they got underway, but there was little response from the shore, as those left behind seemed to realize that the next boat was eight months away! I was cheered up by Bishop and Mrs. Stringer who were there, and asked me back for a second supper."

Before the month was out, ice choked the Yukon River until it was frozen from bank to bank. The river shrank until wide gravel beaches were exposed, looking bare and gray until the snow fell. But the river continues to run beneath the ice and in places stays open in spots which permit net fishing at certain times when the fish are running. The open areas often "steam" in the severe cold.

"It was thirty below zero by October 28th, with enough snow that I could wash my face," Toby's diary reported. "The Peel River Indians say that if you wash your face in the first snow you will be beautiful. So here's hoping!"

"Everyone admires the Peel River Indians so much, with their fine appearance, their fast dogteams in harness decorated with wool rosettes and bells. They come to Dawson about once a year and everyone is glad to see them, although their men are said to be fierce! This year they raced along the snowy streets and pulled up in a swirl of powdered snow just in front of the Bishop's House. There, the resourceful and good-natured Mrs. Stringer entertained them all with dinner and pictures and music, played on mouth organs and concertinas."



*Toby and friends tobogganing
on the Yukon River at Dawson.*

Skating parties at Whitehorse seemed tame after Toby found that the Dawson custom was to perform on the glassy ice of a frozen backwater of the Yukon River, while dark, open waters raced along just a few yards away. "We used to push chairs around until we were proficient, then we were invited to skating parties up the Klondike River where the ice was swept clear by the men and boys. There would be suppers eaten around a blazing campfire and then more skating until we could have dropped from sheer weariness."



The Yukon River flooded the main streets of Dawson in the spring.

When the Yukon River froze, it was a case of arrested motion, the big chunks of ice stopping in their tracks one cold night. In November, Toby had an adventure.

"We were always happy to try something new, and when a sudden thaw opened the river, the ferry-man offered to row four of us across. We ignored Bishop Stringer's warning, and had an exciting, wild trip dodging ice-sheets on the fast-flowing river. A man onshore kept shouting: 'Hurry, or you won't get back!' We made it, but only just, and the ice closed right in behind us.



Victoria Lord and Effie McDonald, granddaughter of Archdeacon Robert McDonald, at the Dawson hostel, photo by Bishop Stringer in 1926.

“One day I crossed the river by the ice-trail along with the children from the hostel. They tobogganed with Ed Whitehouse’s sleighs while he and I had a chat. I was fascinated to hear that he had lived six years in New Zealand.....”

Christmas was a happy time at the hostel in Dawson; the children busy with anthem and carol practices, the staff frantically baking, decorating, wrapping presents and filling stockings and twenty extra guests for Christmas Eve festivities. The New Year was ushered in by pealing bells and rockets, and following the Dawson custom, all the men went from house to house on New Year’s Day, kissing the women and accepting a cup of good cheer. Among Toby’s Christmas gifts in the mail were brooches and spoons of ivory and gold nuggets, and the Rev. Mr. Moody sent her some dog pictures from Fort Yukon.



*Chief Isaac, of Moosehide, with
Toby in front of the Moosehide
Mission school.*



Mrs. Totty and Martha Totty at the Moosehide Mission near Dawson in 1924.

When Mr. Young of the hostel staff took her for a dogsled ride to the Old Inn roadhouse, coming home through falling snow; when everyone rode to Moosehide to look at the wonderful Christmas trees in the school and church, had supper with Canon Totty and rode home again pulled by a dogteam driven by a Peel River Indian while bright moonlight lit up the hills...Toby could only cry to herself: "How I love this life! And how I will hate to leave it when the Johnsons return."

Visits to Bear Creek with the Rev. Mr. Shirley for Sunday service at the gold company town; hockey games to cheer at the skating rink; the annual dogteam races; dinner parties and guests of her own, including Billy Townsend, whom her father had taught in New Zealand...these highlights helped speed the winter months. Toby marked her 32nd birthday on Palm Sunday, with gifts from the children and the Stringers, and a hike to gather pussywillows in the thawing snow.



Toby visiting Joe Taylor's home at Forty Mile.

At Easter, with borrowed sleeping bags she went home with Selina Taylor for a visit. Her father, Joe Taylor, who hailed from Nelson, New Zealand, had married a Yukon woman and Toby's friendship with Selina lasted for more than half a century.

Now the hostel was shining from a good spring cleaning. The children were packing to go home for the summer. The Johnsons would soon return from their year's holiday, and Toby too prepared to move on, where she did not know.

A Bride on the Arctic Circle

"Now I'm a Sourdough!" wrote Toby after watching the ice of the Yukon River go out that spring. "Whistles blow and bells ring as the ice begins to move. The most important bell is the one placed earlier in the middle of the frozen river, connected to a watching post on-shore. The first movement of the ice rings the bell, the watcher noting the exact hour, minute and second, for a lot of money rides on that time. The ice pool tickets are sold throughout the north, and the Dawson pool can win you \$2,000. At Fairbanks the ice pools run much larger.

"The children were let out of school, shops closed and everyone ran down to enjoy the spectacle, even though it was declared 'a poor break-up' this year, without much excitement, no flooding or danger....

"May 8th and the ice is still running down the river, but the first mail launch of the season has arrived. There were only four men and a dog on board, but her arrival heralds boats, tourists, fresh food and frequent mails."



In the winter of 1920, funeral service for Archdeacon Hudson Stuck at Fort Yukon; from left, Rev. George Moody, Bishop Isaac O. Stringer, Dr. Burke.



Christmas in the Hudson Stuck Memorial Hospital, Fort Yukon about 1920.

Among the visiting guests at the hostel was Bishop Rowe of Alaska; at the rectory Mrs. Shirley entertained Mrs. Heintz, mother of the wife of Dr. "Hap" Burke at Fort Yukon. On May 27th, the Johnsons returned and other staff members prepared to leave.



Episcopal Mission hospital at Fort Yukon in 1920, Dr. "Happy" Burke at right.

At midnight on May 30th, following a farewell party given for the Shirleys who were going to the United States, Toby boarded the small paddleboat HAZEL B. and set forth on her long journey home to New Zealand via Vancouver, by way of Fort Yukon.

"I just had to see the midnight sun from inside the Arctic Circle" she told Dr. Burke and the Rev. George Moody who met her boat there a few days later.

"Fort Yukon was more like a busy Carcross than another Dawson City," she wrote. "It was a large Indian village with church, school and hospital. Jimmy's Place was a special feature for tourists. Displays of mastodon ivory paperknives, napkin rings, jewelry, moosehide and beadwork moccasins and gauntlets were



Dr. Burke, Nurse Ryder and mail carrier Henry Beideman with frozen feet, at Hudson Stuck Memorial Hospital, Fort Yukon, 1921.



Young Grafton Burke at the radio, in St. Stephen's Mission at Fort Yukon about 1920.

hastily arranged. Trappers gathered here each spring to arrange the sale of their furs by telegraph; two of them were Rube and Bill Mason who came down the Porcupine River once a year to unload furs and load up a year's supplies."

A guest at the Burke home, Toby was sought out by George Moody, and while visiting trappers, traders and missionaries wandered in and out of the living room of the mission house, he complained "We can't venture outside because of the mosquitoes and we can't find privacy here nor the comfort of a dark and moonlit evening!" Nevertheless, he proposed that they should marry.



Toby and George Moody on their honeymoon in Dawson, 1926, in front of St. Paul's.



The Reverend George Moody at Fort Yukon, Alaska.

When Toby insisted she wasn't suited to be a parson's wife, he replied "You are the only girl to sweep me off my feet!" Toby accepted.

It was a June wedding, with the engagement and wedding rings rushed from Dawson, the wedding gown made by Mrs. Burke from a bolt of white silk contributed by Bishop Rowe. Dr. Burke performed the ceremony in his capacity of Justice of the Peace, and young Grafton Burke, who had stayed at the hostel in Dawson, carried the ring on the traditional white silk cushion. Following a merry wedding party, the Moodys boarded the returning riverboat and began their married life with a five-week honeymoon in the rectory at Dawson City before beginning their time of service at Eagle, Alaska.

George Moody was one of an English family of 13 children, educated at Chichester and a Teacher college. He came out to Canada as a teacher and later entered the Anglican Theological College in Vancouver, Latimer Hall. Assigned to the north as a missionary, he built



Mission House sitting room at Old Crow in the 1920s.

a church at Rampart House and was later missionary at Old Crow, learning to preach to the Loucheux people in the Takudh dialect, using the books translated by Archdeacon McDonald years before.

While at Old Crow, Moody entertained Vilhaljmur Stefansson, the noted Arctic traveller, on several of his trips through the little Indian village on the Porcupine.

Stefansson followed his own dictum that any European could survive if he lived as the Eskimos do...this included no bathing, which brought about an interesting sidelight. When Stefansson fell ill with typhoid and pneumonia at Herschel Island, Dr. Burke was sent to bring him in for treatment at Fort Yukon and the party passed through Old Crow. George Moody's missionary teachings included personal hygiene, followed scrupulously by the Old Crow Indians and one of them objected furiously when the unwashed Stefansson was put in his clean bed!

Mr. Moody left Rampart in 1922 for Dawson City where he became rector of St. Paul's and first met Toby and Torchy from New Zealand. Laura Berton's book, "I Married The Klondike," tells a story about the Rev. Mr. Moody being called upon to officiate at a funeral where he was expected to deliver a eulogy for a departed parishioner who was not noted for church attendance. Moody protested: "It — it — isn't done, it simply isn't done! Not unless it is for a jolly king or something." Whereupon the widow cried: "I tell you my Bill was a king. He was my king. I want you should give him a nize sermon!"

In 1924 he was chosen by Bishop Rowe, Bishop of Alaska, for the mother church of St. Stephen's at Fort Yukon. From there he courted Toby, and upon their marriage took her to Eagle, his new posting, where they lived four years.

“Laden with flowers from all our friends, we sailed for Eagle, Alaska on September 1” wrote Toby Moody in 1926, “beginning a new and fascinating time in my life. Eagle is situated on the Yukon River, surrounded by mountains, and in the autumn reds and golds, looked particularly welcoming to a new bride and untried parson’s wife.”

Sister Torchy came from Labrador for a ten-day visit before returning home to New Zealand. Soon afterward, frost and snow put ice on the river, the last birds flew south, the days grew short and northern lights clung to velvet-black night skies.

Toby wrote “Caribou are crossing the river here in bands of 50 to 300 daily, all day. I can see that life at Eagle is going to be different!

“For instance, there is Nimrod, the miner, who has killed a bear and used its teeth to make himself a set of gnashers. And Mrs. Turnbull, our Canadian neighbour, who hoists her husband’s red handkerchief on a flagpole when there is mail, or news. And Mr. Hillard, the American Customs officer who came in for the summer months only.”

“George put in the first 400 cords of green and dry wood he says we will need before spring. After the first snow, he filled a tub with snow, threw in boiling water, and quickly spaded it around the foundations of the house, sealing it against the cold wind. I determined to shine the smoky windows, but left it too late for the water turned to ice...and what a job to see through.”

On November 17, she wrote: “We have had a fire at three p.m. in the Mission House. A sudden down-draft diverted the flames from the great log fire to the wooden ceiling. The temperature was 24 below zero, but nothing was lost. Since the house here is attached to the church, both could have been destroyed.

“Although in winter there is no running water, luckily the people next door were doing their washing. We used the warm water from their tubs to quench the flames. Before long, with the doors open and water splashing about, the floors were like a skating rink! We stayed at the roadhouse for a few days, which was very cold, then we found a cosy cabin and lived there till spring.”

Christmas and New Year’s passed with the usual northern celebrations and the welcome for Little New 1927 was marred somewhat by baby Steele who froze his tongue to a metal cartwheel and was finally freed by the application of warm water!

Along with his church duties, George Moody was also the unofficial doctor, and so Toby became his nurse. “Our worst case” Toby wrote, “was the miner who had shot his hand to pieces. It had been tied up in a flour sack for three days and when he came to us, we could only cut off the sacking, pour iodine into it and send for a plane to take him to Fairbanks. Later, in gratitude, the miner brought me a poke of nuggets and gold dust.”

The sun returned in January, and Toby noted “We are having sun dogs daily...brilliant miniature suns with short bright rainbows.

heralding colder weather. Amid the cold and dark, the sun's bright glare was welcome. But even more so was the package of three hyacinth and narcissus bulbs which arrived over the winter trail on February 12.

"George had ordered them from Dawson and I greeted them with delighted cries and danced them all around the room. That same mail brought wedding gifts from New Zealand—a clock and a silver teapot."

Early in April George left with Mr. Turnbull on a short trip to Barney Creek, on a gray, rainy day, which Toby described as "the longest day I have spent since we were married. I hope to get no more like it." In fact, it was eight days before the men were back, after rough weather and misfortunes of all kinds. They nearly lost the horse, Spot, and their outfits were soaked.

Warm weather and melting snows followed, and Toby could write: "Our monotonous diet of pork and beans has at last been varied with fresh grayling, a delicious white fish. The storm windows have been taken down, the glass polished to let in the sun. Once again caribou are crossing the river ice in bands of 60 or more. It is interesting to watch how they send a scout ahead.

"On May 12th we were standing alongside the river when, crack! bang! off went the ice, but it only moved 100 yards. Even so, great blocks of ice a foot thick were thrown up. George rang the church bell. A Swede won the Ice Pool. As if this were not sufficient excitement, caribou were caught on the ice when it first began to move, but they got ashore in quick time!"



The ice goes out on the Yukon River.

In one day the river, filled with ice cakes, was running free. In two more, Toby wrote: "We've had our first picnic by ourselves. George made a spruce bough camp and we boiled the billy tea in a darling spot of our own a mile from town, by the river."

The first boat arrived at Eagle June second. "Praise be!" wrote Toby. "I'm sure we look like bacon and beans by now!"



First mail came by launch in the spring of 1926 at Eagle.

Suddenly, there was mail. Parcels, papers, letters, and fruit—a crate of bananas they had ordered for themselves. "We sleep with bananas beside the bed and consume at least two at a time. With all the fruit in town, it was like a birthday and everyone was in a holiday mood. We visited the engineer's ivory works and grabbed oranges right off his plate! There are apples too, and rhubarb, and fresh, fresh eggs. Our commissary in Seattle bought our supplies and shipped them in."



Toby Moody with wild flowers in the spring, at Eagle.

Bob Randal flew in from Dawson on May 28th, bringing more mail and freight, and Toby got a snapshot of his plane. An airstrip was being built in front of their cabin. By June the temperature was 50 in the shade and the days long, but nights still cool. Mosquitoes came in their millions, and George screened in the porch, with Mr. Turnbull's assistance. They set up a hammock and spent most of the summer out there. The flower garden was a riot of colour with sweet peas, pansies, stock and marigolds vying with the wildflowers blooming on all sides.

It was time to repair the damage done to the Mission House by the fire and water in the early winter. George called in a carpenter and as each room was completed, he followed along with fresh paint and calcimine.... "The first bloody parson to do any work" said one of his Indian parishioners.

"At last," she wrote, "it looks truly lovely. The Commissary sent us the carpet, twin beds, curtains, china, dressing table, etc., we had ordered after the fire. Even more welcome was a bath tub which we had ordered but never really expected, and crates of medical supplies. It was the only tub for 100 miles and we began to ask people to enjoy a bath, rather than a cup of tea. It was lovely to leave for a month's vacation at Dawson knowing we could come back to the Mission House. The trip upriver and our stay in Dawson became a second honeymoon, living in a cabin opposite the hostel and taking our meals with the children there."

All too quickly, the summer was over, freezeup came on November 14. Temperatures dropped quickly to 40 below and once again the mail came by dogteam.

Toby reported: "Percy DeWolfe is our mailman. He is a famous character known to all Yukoners and Alaskans along the river as The Ironman. He has been known to risk his life to save the mail bags."



Percy (Ironman) DeWolfe and his mail team at Eagle, giving Mrs. Turnbull and Mrs. Moody a little ride about 1927.

By December it was a record fifty below zero, and Toby wrote joyfully, "It's the most snow I have ever seen. Every little twig is covered; every tree stump looks like a snowman. One can almost hear the silence."

Another winter passed and another summer, with the usual round of church activities and household events, with the Moodys getting away for the hikes, picnics and river trips they liked so well. The first frost of 1928 came on September first and Toby wrote: "We hurried to bring in all our surviving flowers....."

"Later, our usual walk in the snow was interrupted when I slipped off the plank bridge and into the slush and water of the deep little creek. A minor event excepting that I was expecting our first baby. George tore down the steep bank and hauled me out safe enough, but he had to push me all the way home. My skirt had frozen in the icy air and went bang-bang-clankety-clank. Once home, he helped me pull off moccasins, heavy socks, skirt and other frozen layers to get me warm and dry.

"With no hospital at Eagle, I prepared to have my baby 100 miles upriver at Dawson City, where St. Mary's Catholic Hospital had a fine reputation and a staff of kindly Sisters of St. Ann. George was granted three months' leave by the American Board of Missions, and we made haste to leave over the ice of the frozen river before it got too cold.

"It was not a comfortable trip, sitting on mail bags for four days. We reached Dawson on Christmas Eve, rented a cabin near the hostel and once again ate many of our meals with the children and staff.

"Our son, St. John, was born March 7, 1929, a long baby weighing nine pounds. The nurses called him our Yukon Nugget and George brought me a nugget and ivory ring to commemorate the happy event. A church guild in New York, which had adopted us as 'their missionaries' insisted on providing the baby's layette, which arrived over the winter trail while I was still in hospital. There were nine boxes; a padded silk dressing gown and bed jacket for me, and seven boxes of the most elegant hand-made clothes from Altman's, New York for our son, a layette complete even to safety pins. A more sophisticated 'nugget' was never seen before in Dawson City!"

The next month passed quickly, and then the Moodys found that if they did not return to Eagle on the last safe trip over the ice, by April 14, they would have to wait until the river opened for navigation. Although she dreaded the trip, Toby urged George to make the arrangements.

"We set out with two teams of horses and dogs, George driving one, Percy DeWolfe another, with me and the baby, and another driven by a father with his wife and baby. As a final act of kindness, the Sisters filled our large Thermos with the morning's milk from their cows, which they knew I loved to drink.

“The trail was treacherous, with slush ice and overflow everywhere. Several times the men had to dig the horses out of the soft snow, and tie moccasins on the dogs’ feet to protect them from the sharp ice.” Every four hours, Percy called a halt at feeding time, and Toby struggled out of her parka into a long fur coat, to nurse her baby.

Their first night’s stop was at Percy’s roadhouse, and Toby had to be helped off the sled, and pushed up and down until the blood began circulating again in her legs. Once inside, she watched eagerly as George opened the Thermos and poured her some milk - only to cry with disappointment when buttermilk and curds plopped out!

Toby’s diary: “With reluctance, each morning I left the warm bunk, packed the baby back in his butter box, lined with old blankets, and stumbled out into the dark. The lanterns were lit, horses and dogs set out and we began our rough journey over the ice humps frozen into topsy-turvy hummocks by a sudden cold snap, then covered with blowing snow, packed like concrete. Each night I felt like a wrung-out foment cloth, blessing a soft little cushion that eased some of the bumps and jarrings of that miserable ride to Eagle.”

At one roadhouse, the keeper said “Mrs. Moody, you are the first woman ever to eat here” and Toby certainly believed him after a quick look at the greasy, dirty beds. She wrote: “We had been warned and simply spread clean towels over the pillows, which were black and shiny from hundreds of heads before ours. We spread our own sleeping robes on top of the blankets and slept inside them. But after travelling all day with a snatched sandwich (a lump of butter and cheese wedged between two doorstops of bread) we could have slept anywhere.

“Often the trail was too soft to stop even for meals, and I would eat my sandwich with my eyes closed, dreaming of the delicious-smelling caribou and vegetable stews which some landlords offered.

The roadhouses were small, the three families of our party all sleeping in opposite corners of one room, with a huge iron heater in the middle. Asked if we would like a curtain drawn, we were too weary to answer.

“George, after running behind the dogs all day, had cramps in his legs most of the nights, while I was numb from inaction. St. John was bothered the least, although covered with feathers from the eiderdown and hairs from the caribou robes, having had no bath since we left Dawson. Friends had given me a supply of old linen to use for him on the trail and wet and dirty diapers were left behind at every roadhouse.

“A blizzard caused us to lose our way one day, as the horses kept edging off the trail and into the bluffs rising from the river, for protection from the storm. While dogs can feel the trail under the snow, horses do not, and maintaining our sense of direction was hard. Anxious hours later, we saw a pinpoint of light like a guiding

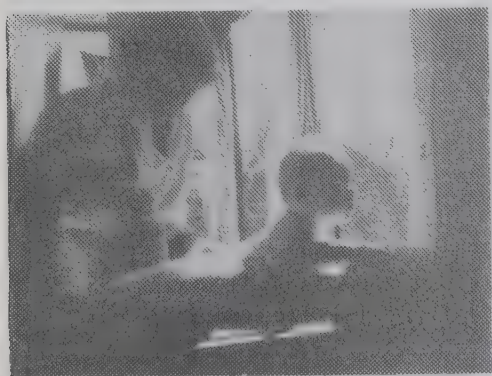
star, that drew us to another roadhouse.

“When the roadhouse proprietor saw the state George was in, he poured him a whiskey, turned to the sink for a pitcher of water to add to it...but by the time he turned back, the whiskey was gone! Its warmth gave George the strength to pull off his parka and mukluks. The caribou parka was soaked with perspiration, for George had run through another day. I was well cared for by the keeper's wife, while Percy tended to the dogs and horses before joining us for the meal.



George Moody, Toby and baby St. John, in front of Calico Bluff at Eagle.

“Such a welcome awaited us when at last we arrived safely at the Mission House in Eagle! Mrs. Turnbull, our Canadian neighbour, wept in her delight, saying she had never expected to see me again, I had looked so ill when leaving.



St. Paul's, oldest Episcopal Church in Alaska, with its youngest parishioner in 1928, St. John Moody in his playpen, and friend.



“That winter, with the baby, was one to remember. We had no sun for six more weeks; there was little dried milk available, and few trips from Dawson to bring it. Although I nursed the baby, I was giving him supplementary feedings, but the dried milk got bluer and bluer until I popped a lump of butter into it. His diet, from a California specialist, included steel-cut oatmeal, steamed for half a day, as well as cod liver oil and sunbaths.

“Pursuing the returning sun from corner to corner of the room, I would shine it on his foot, or hand. By summertime, George had built him a sunporch on our bedroom window, and the Indian children loved to watch him playing there in his coop. As our dining room opened into the church, on Sundays during services we left him asleep in his basket there. All winter long he slept outside until it got more than 20 below zero, just his cheeks and nose showing. Inside was little better, we never had heat in the bedroom and we only lit the furnace when a blizzard was blowing. Our furnace room had a dividing door and there we kept the cases of eggs, oranges and cabbages wrapped in paper, turning the eggs and fruit daily. If he thought the temperature was dropping, George lit the storm lantern to take the chill off the room.

“Until I took him on a visit to New Zealand at the age of three, St. John never had so much as a sniffle.



The Reverend G. Henry Moody with Toby and son on the bank of the Yukon River at Eagle, Alaska

The Final Years

After four years at Eagle, George Moody felt a strong desire to return to southern Canada, and wrote to Bishop Rix in British Columbia. The Bishop replied: "We have the church at Stewart vacant; it is a poor mission and a tough job requiring a missionary with a strong character." Whereupon the Moodys left for Stewart, at the head of the Portland Canal on the Pacific Coast of B.C. where they were to live for the next nine years.

Toby returned to New Zealand to nurse her father through his last illness. Shortly after his death, sister Torchy, who had been ill for several years, died as well. Back again in Stewart, she found George weakened by arthritis and sciatica, and when Dr. Vosburgh, their friend and physician at Stewart, found heart trouble as well, he advised a milder climate. New Zealand seemed the logical solution, and they sailed for the South Island in 1938.

St. John missed the snow during his first New Zealand Christmas, but memories of the north began to fade. His schooling and marriage and family brought him to a sheep farm at Dorie near Rakaia.

George Moody served a number of parishes before his retirement and death in April, 1957. These included Ahahura, in Westland, Kaikoura, Belfast during the second World War where he served also as chaplain of Burwood Hospital, Ashburton, and Tinwald, where they spent five happy years. On retirement, they moved to a flat, spent some time with their son, then joined Toby's widowed mother at Christchurch, who outlived George by two years and died at 94.

Four years after her husband's death, Toby Moody planned a special pilgrimage back to Fort Yukon, Alaska, from Christchurch, New Zealand, for the 35th anniversary of their marriage there. She set off by plane in July, 1961 for Auckland, where she sailed on the CANBERRA's maiden voyage to Vancouver. One of the highlights, for her, was the showing of a film about Dawson City, with Pierre Berton as commentator...he had been a little boy of three when she and George had known him. Visiting old friends in Victoria she accidentally met again Mrs. Field, from Dawson, whom she had seen last 26 years before in Vancouver. The PRINCESS LOUISE brought her up the coast on its last voyage, and at Skagway she boarded the luxurious new observation car on The White Pass & Yukon Route.

When the train stopped at Carcross for a few moments, she walked in to Watson's store and had a chat with Matthew, (back from Vancouver for a visit) who remembered her during her first winter in the Yukon.

On July 25th, 35 years after she had set out from Fort Yukon on her honeymoon, Toby Moody was driving along the Alaska Highway toward Fairbanks from Whitehorse on an air-conditioned bus, with the outside temperature hitting 92 degrees. Her itinerary, put together in New Zealand, was confusing and would have had her retracing her steps at least three times. In Fairbanks, she met a new

friend, Eva McGowan, who was city hostess at the Inside Alaska Tours office. Dropped on Eva's doorstep by a friendly bus driver, Toby found herself taken home, her swollen feet propped up on a footstool, a delicious cup of tea and sympathy. Eva handed Toby's itinerary to Millie "the best jigsaw puzzler I know" in the travel office and arranged for the weary little Kiwi to rest for a few days at the home of Mrs. John-Hansen, recently retired professor at the University of Alaska.

"This time, when I left for Fort Yukon," Toby wrote in her journal, "it was in a tiny Wien Alaska plane. I sat on a shelf beside a man who handed me an air-sick bag and then curled up and went to sleep. Leaning on mail sacks, roped-in freight around us, I recalled that earlier trip by dogteam from Dawson City to Eagle, sitting on the same old mail sacks."



A pilgrimage to Fort Yukon in 1961. Toby Moody and the native driver who remembered the Rev. George Moody from 50 years back.

They touched down at Chicken, and again at Woodchopper, eventually arriving at Fort Yukon, where Toby was the only passenger off. The Indian driver of the airport bus remembered George and welcomed her back. She stayed at The Lodge, a big log building like the old student hostel at Dawson, complete with huge iron stove, and huge meals three times a day.

In 1961, the rector at Fort Yukon was the Rev. Walter Hannum, who welcomed Mrs. Moody back to the Mission, and to the new church. On Sunday, she attended the communion service, heart and mind full of memories of George Moody and their years together in the north.

The Rector brought some of the older Indian people to meet her. One woman said: "Some ministers we forget. Mr. Moody we never forget." For some of them, Toby had snapshots of themselves taken years before as students in Carcross or Dawson, and they were

delighted. So much had changed. The old mission house was gone, and even the hospital was closed, since the sick can now be flown to hospital in Fairbanks. There was a new kindergarten, whose teacher and the rector, were the only white people to stay in the village all winter long.

Back in Fairbanks, Eva McGowan and Milly Webb had arranged her flight to Eagle, and she met Helen Callaghan, whose mother had helped sew Toby's wedding dress at Fort Yukon, 35 years before. Helen gave her a snapshot of George Moody, taken at the funeral of Archdeacon Stuck at Fort Yukon.

Touring the village of Eagle, with many Indian children in tow, Toby found both Mollie Beideman and her brother Horace married and running the store. The student missionary, Christopher Roper, moved her bag and baggage over to the Mission House, where a second storey had been added and she slept in an airy big room between lavender-scented sheets.

"The dear old house was upside down" she wrote, "the sidewalks broken and neglected. As before, all passing missionaries stay here, taking care of Indian and white people, but only in the summer. It is so much of a wilderness now that I picked wild strawberries at the front door. Christopher snapped my picture beside a tree that I remembered from 35 years ago.

"Later, he held church service, ringing the bell, robing, all in his hobnailed boots. I washed with water heated on the big stove, put a scarf around my head and joined the evensong. It was nostalgic to sing once again with an Indian congregation...a time for remembering. I talked with some who had been baptized by George.



Leaving Eagle, after her visit in July, 1961; Toby Moody with student priest Christopher Roper, nephew of the late Archbishop Roper of Rupertsland.

“That night I sat in the old rocking chair where George had rocked and sung our little boy to sleep, always the same song, Harry Lauder’s “Every Night”. It seemed a waste of precious time to sleep, so I sat there listening to the river running swiftly by, the geese honking and watched the sun rise about three o’clock, warming the backdrop of the mountains in its early glow.”

The next morning, she was on her way south again, travelling by bus to the ferry landing at Dawson City, only to find the ferry broken down and passengers being rowed across four at a time. That night she watched the enactment of Robert Service’s poem, “The Cremation of Sam McGee” for the entertainment of the tourists now thronging the gold rush town. She was in St. Paul’s church for morning service the next day, and later she visited with old Mr. McCuish, retired former Mountie, and they reminisced about the Fields, Sergeant Joy and other mutual friends.

The S.S. KENO was now a National Historic Site and the courthouse had become a nursing home for the last of the old men who had walked in over the Klondike Trail. Now there was an up-to-date RCMP detachment and modern new homes where she remembered the old buildings of 40 years earlier; she found the Bertons’ old home where she and George had picked the pansies, and even managed to locate the little cabin where she and Torchy had spent the happy summer of 1922...now boarded up and surrounded by weeds.

One of the happiest meetings was with Selina Taylor, “my best girl at the hostel so long ago,” and together they re-visited the old rectory and hostel buildings.

Early in August, she flew south to Whitehorse again, left some of her early day snaps in the Old Log Church Museum, and continued down the Alaska Highway by bus. Her plans to be home in New Zealand by Christmas were doomed when her ship, WAITEMATA, collided with a freighter and was taken to dry dock for repairs which took far longer than expected. In Vancouver, Victoria and Seattle she visited old friends and filled in the last anxious weeks before sailing from North America for the last time.

She left San Francisco November 27 for a peaceful voyage to New Zealand, and on December 24, Toby wrote in her journal: “It is Christmas Eve and I sit on deck alone with my transistor radio, listening to the Queen’s broadcast and enjoying the carols being played by the seven Raratongans on board....the lights of Auckland shine tantalizingly near...at two a.m. we dropped anchor and awaited our pilot. I have been ringing the children....soon I’ll be in the air on the way home. It all seems unbelievable—the going and the coming back.”

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